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Captain BRITAIN™



Welcome to *Captain Britain Monthly*, Number Twelve – our first birthday issue! And a pretty fascinating year it's been, what with a simultaneous launch on both sides of the Atlantic, Eagle Awards for Favourite New Comic and for Alan Davis as Favourite Artist, a place in the final of our section in the *Entrepreneur Publisher Of The Year* Competition and, most importantly, now 12 instalments of what we like to think is one of the most thoughtful and original comic strips around.

Fear not, though – we're already working hard to make *Captain Britain's* second year as exciting as the first. Unfortunately, we've been forced to increase our cover price by 10p – a casualty of rising production costs – but it has to be if we're to continue providing you with your British super hero thrills.

It's been a busy period for the Captain, too. Braddock Manor is less and less like home these days, following the arrival of the Resources Control Executive and with the giant computer, Mastermind, assuming a more active role in the Manor's affairs. And so the Captain has gone walkabout, as he and the startlingly transformed Meggan venture abroad. But no sooner has he watched her destroy the horrifying House Of Baba Yaga than the pair of them are whisked away through time and space to face more confusion in *Alarms and Excursions*.

That tale begins on the very next page. We hope you like it – and the rest of the issue!

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BRIAN, WHAT
HAPPENED? WHERE
ARE WE?

WELL... FROM THE
ARCHITECTURE, THE
ANGLE OF THE SUN
AND THE BARTY OF
THE AIR, I'D GUESS...

...THE PERU OF THE
INCAS... PRE-SPANISH
...SAY FOURTEENTH
CENTURY.



I'VE SEEN THE ONE
THAT BROUGHT US
HERE BEFORE. SHE
WAS AT BRADDOCK
MANOR WITH THAT
HORRIBLE WOMAN-
THING, GATECRASHER.



SHE'S CALLED
FASCINATION.
WATCH YOUR STEP.
SHE CAN BE A
BIT...

HEY!



...UNPREDICTABLE...

Captain BRITAIN

ALARMS and EXCURSIONS

HELLO, CAPTAIN. AND
IF IT ISN'T THE LITTLE
CHICKEN GROWN INTO A
BEAUTIFUL SWAN!



You mean ugly
duckling, Mother.
Snee. snee.

UGH! IT'S HER—
THE HIPPOPOTAMUS!

JAMIE DELANO ALAN DAVIS
CO-CREATORS
NOEL DAVIS ANNIE HALFACREE
ART ASST. LETTERER
IAN RIMMER
EDITOR





"FULL MOONS."



"IT WAS A MISTAKE WHICH ANYONE COULD HAVE MADE. BUT IN THIS CASE IT LEAD TO..."

"TRAGEDY."



"WE HELD THE WAKE IN A RAGROCK BAR. IT WAS A SOLEMN OCCASION..."

TO OUR DEAR DEPARTED COMRADE...

"...UNTIL THE BERSERKER PIRATES ARRIVED TO HELP US MOURN."



"THEIR LEADER, AN UNGLOTH BUTCHER, WAS OFFENSIVE."

THERE'S A MUD WALLOW NEAR HERE. LET'S GO WRESTLE...

"DISTRAUGHT WITH THE LOSS OF MY FRIEND, I'M AFRAID I LOST CONTROL..."



ANIMAL!

"MY REPRIMAND WAS OVER VIGOROUS, I FEAR..."



"AND THE PAYING OF BLOOD MONEY TO HIS STRICKEN FAMILY WAS AN UNAVOIDABLE CONSEQUENCE."

THAT'S ALL OF IT... YOU VULTURES!

"WE WERE GENEROUS TO A FAULT."

"THE OTHERS BLAMED ME FOR OUR UNFORTUNATE RUN OF BAD LUCK. AS THE LEADER OF OUR LITTLE GROUP I GRACIOUSLY ACCEPTED THEIR CRITICISM."



"OHVE OFF, THEN, YOU LINGREATHFUL SLIME! I ONLY KEPT YOU AROUND FOR LAUGHS!"

"BUT THEN THE MUTINIOUS RABBLE DESERTED ME, TO GAIN EMPLOYMENT WITH ONE OF OUR FUTURE COMPETITORS..."

"A YOUNG ORGANISATION THAT HAD READ OF OUR MISFORTUNES IN THEIR HISTORY BOOKS AND TRAVELLED BACK IN TIME TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION."



ONLY FASCINATION REFUSED THEIR PERSISTENT OFFERS AND REMAINED WITH ME IN MY HOUR OF NEED...



Er, Mother...?

SHUT UP, LIZARD!

"I HAVE NEVER BEEN ONE TO WALLOW SELF PITY, SO, INVAILING MYSELF OF THE BENEFITS OF MY STATUS, I ATTENDED A CELEBRATION HELD BY THE DESPOT OF KANDAHAR."



I SMELL A PARTY, BONEBAG!

"THE DESPOT SEEMED FASCINATED BY ME..."



"WE HAD A NICE CHAT ABOUT HIS HOBBY..."

"IT TURNED OUT HE WAS A COLLECTING NUT... MATHEMATICAL EPHEMERA, PYTHAGORAS' COMPASSES, NEWTON'S APPLE, GORON'S PHOTON-COUNTER, THAT SORT OF THING. I SOON ASCERTAINED WHAT OBJECT HE COVETED ABOVE ALL OTHERS..."

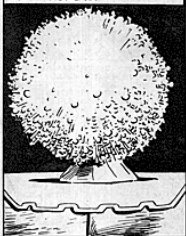


...AND YOU'D PAY FOR THAT, WOULD YOU?"

"...A PERFECT MATHEMATICAL MODEL OF THE UNIVERSE FORMED OUT OF ROCK CRYSTAL REVERED BY SOME PRIMITIVES IN A CITY WHICH ALL RECORDS SHOWED WAS DOOMED TO EXTINCTION BY AN EARTHQUAKE..."

"IT WAS ON EARTH, CAPTAIN. YOUR EARTH. PERHAPS I WAS RASH, BUT I WAS A LITTLE UNDER THE WEATHER!"

"MY PLAN WAS FOR THE LIZARD TO ESTABLISH THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE MODEL, AND THEN FOR FASCINATION TO REACH IN AND REMOVE IT... FROM THE JAWS OF THE EARTHQUAKE AS IT WERE..."



"...IN THIS WAY, SINCE THE MODEL WAS DOOMED TO DESTRUCTION, REMOVING IT WOULD NOT INTERRUPT ANY CAUSAL CONTINUUM."



"UNFORTUNATELY, THOUGH DEAR FASCINATION IS A LOYAL CREATURE HER INTELLIGENCE IS BARELY EQUAL TO ONE OF YOUR DOMESTIC PETS..."

"AFTER NUMEROUS ATTEMPTS, RESULTING IN THE APPROPRIATION OF ASSORTED TRINKETS, WE REALIZED THAT SHE COULD NOT IDENTIFY THE MODEL WITHOUT ITS SCENT."



"WHICH, INCIDENTALLY, IS HOW SHE LOCATED YOU SO EASILY."

"I DECIDED TO TRY THE GODS' FROM-THE-SKY APPROACH."

ON YOUR KNEES, INKLE DOGS!

Inca Mother. Call them Incas.

"THEY SHOWED DUE DEFERENCE..."



There's certainly a lot of gold about.

HOW VULGAR.

"... AND THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF FEAR."

"EVEN THE PRIESTHOOD WAS SMILING AND OBSEQUIOUS..."



"THEY OFFERED TRIBUTES..."

"WE ASKED FOR THE CRYSTAL MODEL."

"THEY SAID THE BANQUET WAS A NECESSARY PART OF THE ACCEPTANCE CEREMONY. IT PAINS ME THAT I DID NOT SUSPECT..."



"THE FIRST TREMORS STRUCK AT THE SAME TIME AS THE POISON IN THE FELIX."

"...USUALLY VERY EFFECTIVE, IF APPLIED WITH SUBTLETY."

"FORTUNATELY, FASCINATION'S SPECIES FEEDS ON THE EXCESS EMOTIONAL ENERGY OF SENTIENT BEINGS, SO SHE HAD NOT EATEN ANY OF THE FRUIT."

Motherree...

FLUB!

"I ONLY JUST MANAGED TO TELEPATHICALLY INSTRUCT HER TO BRING YOU HERE BEFORE I PASSED GRACEFULLY INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS."

"WE CAME TO DOWN HERE WITH THAT CACKLING HIGH PRIEST GLOATING OVER US..."

"...SO, GODS, IF YOU REMAIN IN THE COOL WATER, THE MANY PARASITE EGGS WHICH YOU HAVE EATEN MAY NOT HATCH!"

"I WAS HUMILIATED."

ENOUGH. ENOUGH! YOU'LL HAVE ME IN TEARS! BASICALLY, WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS THAT, THROUGH AEROGANCE AND INERTITUDE, YOU'VE BLUNDERED INTO DISASTER AND TURNED ALL YOUR FRIENDS AGAINST YOU. YES?

Not me, Mother.

WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO?

YOU COULD SHOW SYMPATHY, CAPTAIN. IF NOT FOR ME, THEN FOR MY COMPANION...

YOU FAT HYPOCRITE!

YOU COULD ALSO FETCH THE REMEDY...

THE LIZARD GOT THE SECRET FROM THE HIGH PRIEST'S MIND. THE RAW MATERIALS ARE, AS ONE WOULD SUSPECT, BOTH ELABORATE AND INACCESSIBLE.

THIS MAKES US EVEN... RIGHT?

HURRY BRIAN! I'LL BE THERE THE EARTHQUAKE BUILDING...



HE FINDS IT. A MYSTIC
HERB GROWING IN THE
RUINS OF A TEMPLE
GARDEN, HIGH ON THE
SLOPES OF A DISTANT
MOUNTAIN.



... AND, IN THE
SILENCE OF THE
FILTERED LIGHT,
TUGS IT FROM
THE SHELTERING
EARTH.



AS IT SQUIRMS AND
WRIGGLES IN HIS
HAND, A THIN HIGH
WHISTLE DRILLS THE
AIR.



WINGS BEAT AND
TALONS GLEAM.
A HUGE SHADOW
RIDES THE HUMMING
AIR.



INSTINCT TWISTS
HIM FROM THE
CUTTING CLAWS.

BIRDS!

CREEEECH!

BUT SURELY NO BIRD AS BIG
AS THIS EVER LIVED ON EARTH.

I'VE NEVER SEEN
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SPECIMEN OF ANY-
THING LIKE THIS...
THEY MUST BE
MUTATIONS OF
SOME SORT.



AWK!

NO TIME TO
WORRY ABOUT
THAT NOW...











Next It's Hard To Be A Hero

WELCOME. I AM A NODE OF THE OMNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE - A KEEPER, A GUARDIAN OF THE TIMELESS HERITAGE THAT SPAWNED ME. I AM A WATCHPOST, A WAY STATION, IN THIS PAPA-PLUNG, BUT EVEN MORE TRAVERSED CONTINUUM. HOWEVER, FOR THE PURPOSES OF YOUR LIMITED MINDS, I AM SIMPLE.

WAS TERMINED

Specification Scan NO1
part 2



Minor Details: Name - Brian Braddock; Sex - Male; Age - 29 years;
Height - 6'6"; Weight - 18 stones, 5 pounds.

As a dry run for the apocalyptic conflict to come, Captain Britain - now garbed in a new costume, and accompanied by the elfin Jackdaw - was dispatched to Earth 238, an Earth under the reality warping control of the mad mutant, Jim Jaspers. Jaspers, along with the Fury (a Cybiote), and his police force, the Status Crew, had succeeded in eradicating all super-beings from this Earth, and had taken total control. Into this crooked world came Captain Britain - confused, disorientated, and ultimately vulnerable. With Earth 238 in the midst of a reality storm, his companion Jackdaw slain, and his ally, Saturnyne - an interdimensional traveller - abandoning him, Captain Britain lost the will to fight and was destroyed by the Fury.

The reality storm had hampered Merlin's ability to pluck Captain Britain from the maelstrom, and so, instead of a battered but intact super-hero, he was left only with a scrap of costume, a fragment of bone tissue and a hank of hair. From these meagre raw materials, Merlin - using the most advanced science at his disposal - was able to reconstruct and reanimate the body of Captain Britain. United in body and soul once more, Captain Britain was dispatched back to his own Earth - Earth 616. As he began to pick up the tatters of his life (Braddock Manor was re-occupied, his sister, Betsy, contacted, and the logic fault in his circuits corrected) events were occurring that would set the stage for Captain Britain's ultimate challenge. The pieces were falling into place.

Saturnyne was to stand trial before the dimensional development court, with the Omniversal tyrant, Mandragon, prosecuting. The mercenary group, The Special Executive, were contracted by Saturnyne to bring Captain Britain to testify on her behalf. On Earth 238, the Fury prepared for its journey through the dimensions. Its destination: Earth 616. Its quarry: Captain Britain and Captain UK (Linda McQuillan), the only super-being to escape the events of Earth 238. She it was who sensed said events were repeating themselves on Earth 616 with an alternate Jim Jaspers beginning his campaign to stamp out super-beings.

With the pieces all in play, the game proceeded rapidly. Captain Britain, Captain UK, Saturnyne and the Special Executive were drawn into combat with the Fury and Jaspers. The endgame, amidst a raging reality Warp, saw the Fury destroy Jaspers, and subsequently be destroyed by Captain Britain and Captain UK. The madness had been halted and Captain Britain had proven equal to the challenge for which he had been groomed ever since that day on Darkmoor in 1976. But the battle was long and costly, with many repercussions. Merlin died at the game's end, and - now passed to his daughter, Roma; the effects of the Jaspers' reality war have unsettled the fabric of society; and his creations, The Crazy Gang, still roam loose on this Earth.

With Captain Britain now in control of his own destiny, his usefulness is limited. He is rarely with this unit, and is an inadequate protector of said unit. Therefore, my purpose is clear. I can no longer watch from the sidelines... It becomes necessary that I take control...





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Next Issue: Exit CAPTAIN BRIAN...

Enter CAPTAIN BETSY!



In **Captain Britain**... 13, Brian Braddock turns his back on the life of a super-hero—he will be Captain Britain no more. In that case, who will? Would you believe his sister, Betsy? It's true—much to the RCX's delight, Betsy Braddock has donned the mantle of Captain Britain. But, when an old C.B. foe returns to challenge her, she finds **It's Hard To Be A Hero!** Be here in one month for 11 pages of classic action—with a shock ending you'll have to see to believe!

Captain Britain Communications

Our Address:

23 Redan Place, Bayswater, London W2 4SA, England.

Dear All,

In the last couple of issues people have been pleading for more pages of Captain Britain. Well, since you say you can't produce any more, how about re-printing some of his old adventures (small break for applause)? You could start from the very beginning and maybe even include *Contest of Champions*.

O.K., let's talk about issue 9. Yet another brilliant super-team has been created in The Cherubim. What really strikes me is the originality of their appearance and powers, which put them on a par with the Special Executive and the Technet. Other high points were Brian being picked on by Betsy, Alison, the RCX, the Warpies, and Mastermind (whew, not very popular, is he!), and the scene in the bathroom – a classy piece of writing, that.

Finally, about *Space Thieves* – it's very, very funny and brilliantly drawn. Please, what ever you do with this mag, keep *Space Thieves* in it! P.S. – This is the third time I've written, so for God's sake print this one!

Matt Maghull.

We'll think about it.

Dear Captain Britain,

I'm annoyed, very annoyed. Not with the stories so much – all are absolutely brilliant – but with the fact that Captain Britain never totally defeats his enemies (with perhaps the exception of Sidney Crumb and the Fury (?!)). Let me state my evidence:

- 1) Chief Inspector Dai Thomas, is he sitting around doing nothing?
- 2) The Crazy Gang. They've got to be up to something.
- 3) Slaymaster. He must be after the Captain after that humiliating defeat.
- 4) Vixen. She's still out there somewhere, perhaps after the Captain's costume once more?
- 5) Mastermind. Can't he see that this machine is still evil?
- 6) The RCX. This lot are going to be a lot of trouble for the Captain.

Where will it end? I'm sure people would like to see some of this lot dealt with a bit more permanently! It's very frustrating! Having said that, though, I find no other fault with the magazine – both stories and presentation are excellent! Capitaine Grande Bretagne, Fleetwood.

Like to see a Captain Britain villain dealt with a bit more permanently, eh? Well then, we suggest that you make a date with next issue's C.B. story, it's *Hard To Be A Hero*. The end a certain villain meets in that makes 'permanently' seem an understatement!



Dear Captain,

After months of searching, creeping and generally being a nuisance in every newsagents this side of London, I eventually found copies of Captain Britain 9 and 10. After noting 9's colourful cover, I read through 11 pages of pure magic, and then went on to *Thicker Than Water* (will I ever trust old ladies again?!). Then after reading *Abolom Dask* and *Night Raven*, I came to the letters page – what's this? A 'Captain Doodlebug' seems to be hinting that he didn't like my letter in issue 7!

Anyway, on to issue 10. If there was a top ten for covers, that one would come top. And the strip inside matched it in every way. *Space Thieves* had a strange ending, but was good nevertheless, and it looks as though *Night Raven* is taking over your mag. Do I hear you're giving away a free poster in issue 11? Great!

Captain Letterpage, Morden.

Captain Letterpage? Captain Doodlebug? Capitaine Grande Bretagne? Don't any real people write to this magazine any more?

Dear People,

Re: *Thicker Than Water* in Captain Britain 9. This nearly had me writing my first letter of complaint to your otherwise illustrious publication. The first half of this text story was fine, but as I progressed towards the end, I thought – 'blow me down, Colin and Mrs Hoople aren't actually gonna meet' and with one column to go I thought – 'they really aren't gonna meet. What a waste of space.' And with one paragraph to go – 'O.K., they are going to meet, and Hoople's going to kill him. So what?' And then I reached that final line – 'Oh, hello Mum.' Hat I loved it! Rest

assured, I immediately searched mother's shopping bag after reading that! In fact, I removed a rather lethal looking tin of baked beans and a deadly French loaf – heaven only knows what she could've done with those!

Cap Britain's strip was its usual boffo self. I especially liked the bathroom sequence with the 'thing in the tub', having had a similar experience with a loofah and a bar of soap (don't ask!). This Mastermind's a scheming bleeder though, and there's no denying it. I blame it on the haircut myself, definitely suspect, that! And teaming up with the RCX to instigate Jamie Braddock's abduction is a positively anti-social act. Y'know, I'm not too sure I like these people!

Space Thieves continues to be a laugh a minute. And what's this, John Stokes is helping out the artwork? Welcome back John, long time no see. And as for Captain Doodlebug, the guy's obviously wacko. Hell's donkey, he made my letter seem normal by comparison – which is a sure sign of lunacy! Give the man a job, that's my advice. Eddie (Armageddon out here) Maddock, Twickenham.

Now come on, Eddie, don't sell yourself short – no one can make your letters appear normal! And if you're pining for John Stokes' artwork (apart from a two issue stint on *Transformers* issues 29 and 30) his classic *Black Knight* strip sees print once again, beginning on the very next page.

Dear Ian,

Ten issues of Captain Britain Monthly already and both art and storyline seem to be developing nicely. A year ago I would not have believed that the good Captain could have survived without the guiding hand of Alan Moore, and yet here he is, flourishing with the aid of Jamie Delano. The stories have continued to contain that same element of intrigue and pathos that makes them so much better than any of the competition. I really like the way the stories are going at the moment, my only real concern being that recently the Captain seems to be such a target for tragedy. In this vein I have grave doubts about the relationship being hinted at between him and Meggan. I very much hope that she will become a major character in this strip.

Lastly, a small criticism. It certainly seems to me that Alan is having to rush the art, and indeed pages 8 and 9 in issue 10 seemed to have been hardly inked at all. However, all is forgiven for that one panel (page 8, panel 3) of Captain Britain 8 with Meggan watching Fireball XLS. That really touched me, and I wonder whether it was Alan or Jamie who was the Gerry Anderson fan. Anyway, good luck with the book, it gets better every month. Dougal Dubash, Paignton.

Who isn't a Gerry Anderson fan? But seriously, we thought that was a nice touch as well. And he's face it, the lady's taste must be improving – last time we saw her in front of the box she was waiting for Crossroads to come on! By the way, Alan's inking on those pages in issue 10 was merely a technique to denote a flashback in the midst of C.B.'s nightmare.

Dear Captain Britain Producers, C.B. is brill! What more can I say? Gavin McQuaid, London N12.

How about – Fab! Magict Skill! Super! Ace! Knockout! Well Wicked! Fan-dabby-dosy!

THE

BLACK KNIGHT

Script: Steve Parkhouse

Art: John Stokes



LOSING HEIGHT FAST, THE HELICOPTER CLIPPED A TREE...

...AND FINALLY OUT OF CONTROL, PLUNGED INTO A DEEP DRIFT!



WITH THAT, THE BLACK KNIGHT WAS GONE... PASSING OVER A SMALL, STONE, COTTAGE HIDDEN IN THE SNOW.



A COTTAGE BELONGING TO OLD SARAH HUMPHORD, KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE PARISH FOR HER STRANGE, OCCULT WAYS.



THE A BAD OMEN, GREYMALIN, NO GOOD SMALL CHANCE OF IT WHEN THE DARK RIDER TAKES WING, EVEN THE WEATHER TURNS AGAINST US.

STRANGE GOWN'S COULD BE SEEN IN THE SKY.

IT'S COMING! HORSE, TRAILS THAT STOP SUDDENLY LIKE AS IF BEST AND RIDER HAD VANISHED BLOWN OFF!



WHO WOULD BELIEVE IT ALL STARTED WHEN THIS STRANGER FIRST CAME, DRIVING US.



WHY DOES 'T BOOM THE SEASHORE, SO WHAT BE 'T LOOKIN' FOR, EH, PUS?

WHY BE 'T EYES SO EMPTY AND SAD? SMALL WE KNOW?

BUT THOSE QUESTIONS MUST REMAIN UNANSWERED AS OLD SARAH FALLE SILENT, WATCHING THE STRANGE CRAFT THAT HAS INTERFERED HER DAILY ROUTINE...

REDFIELD FROM EAGLE THREE ONE FIVE... COME IN REDFIELD OVER...



HIT THE DECK THIRTY MILES WEST OF TREWELYN AFTER COLLISION WITH U.S. FOR 'YOU' READ 'KNIGHT ON WINGS HORSE'!



A HURRIED RADIO CALL TO A NEARBY BASE, AND A WARRIOR VERTICAL TAKE-OFF INTERCEPTOR FIGHTER STRUGGLES INTO THE SKY...



ARMED AND BRIEFED WITH A SINGLE OBJECTIVE... BANG DOWN THE UMD!

BUT OTHER EARS WERE LISTENING... EAVESDROPPING ON MILITARY RINGS LEADING IN THE SAFETY AND DARKNESS OF A CRUMBLING CASTLE...



HMM... WE HAVE HIM NOW?

THE BLACK KNIGHT HAS BROKEN COVER. MY MASTER SHOULD KNOW OF THIS.



THE MINION HOBBLING TO HIS MASTER, A STRANGE BROODING FIGURE ETCHED DARKLY UPON THE GEDY OF DARKNESS...



SURE! THE BLACK KNIGHT IS AHEAD... HE IS WITHIN OUR GRASP!

MODDED! PRIME MOVER OF DARKNESS, ENTRAPPED BY THE WEDGMA GEDDY TO BATTLE EVER FOR POWER OVER THE MINDS OF MEN...



SO BE IT! OUR PATIENCE IS FINALLY REWARDED. THE SCENE IS SET.



Next: Dawn Of The Hellravens!



The Mysterious NIGHT-RAVEN

Script: Steve Parkhouse

Art: David Lloyd

NIGHT-TIME IN THE CITY... MR. BIG HAS HIRED AN ASSASSIN TO KILL NIGHT-RAVEN, AND CAPTAIN DOYLE OF THE CITY POLICE IS ALSO ON HIS TRAIL. BUT MR. BIG IS FLUSHED OUT OF HIS SPEAKEASY LAIR BY DOYLE'S MEN... AND NOW FIGHTS BACK IN THE ONLY WAY HE KNOWS!



WE'VE GOTTA STOP HIM BEFORE HE HITS THE STREET!



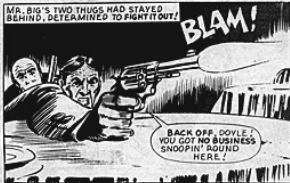
THE DRIVER COULDN'T BEAR TO LOOK... BUT EVEN THEN HIS EARS COULDN'T SHUT OUT THE UNHOLY SHRIEK OF TYRES, BRAKES, KLAXON... AND THE HIGH-PITCHED SCREAM OF TERROR THAT TORE THROUGH THE NIGHT...

A SCREAM THAT WAS SUDDENLY CUT OFF, TO BE REPLACED WITH THE CRUNCHING AND GRINDING OF CRUSHED WOOD AND METAL



SPEAKING OF NIGHT-RAVEN... WE NOW SEE THAT ONCE AGAIN OUR MYSTERIOUS HERO IS IN THE GRIP OF THE ASSASSIN WHO HAS STALKED HIM MERCILESSLY FOR HOURS AFTER RELENTLESS HOUR...





THEN DOYLE'S GUN ROARED A REPLY
MORE ELOQUENT THAN ANY WORDS!



IT WAS TOO MUCH FOR THUG
NUMBER TWO...



...BUT DOYLE WAS NOT
ON HIS HEELS...



...BUT BE CAREFUL...THERE'S
A HUNDRED AND ONE PLACES ROUND
HERE WHERE HE COULD BE HIDING!



THE THREE POLICEMEN ADVANCED IN SILENCE
INTO THE DARKNESS OF THE ALLEY...THEN...



AS ONE MAN THEY TURNED...AND FIRED!



...IT WAS THE HIRED KILLER WHO HAD BEEN ON THE
RECEIVING END OF DOYLE'S FUSILLADE...



A FIGURE STAGGERED INTO THE LIGHT...



...NIGHT-TIME IN THE CITY!

CROSS-SECT

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MARVEL Save the Children

HELP US TO HELP FUND FOR ETHIOPIA

A Prize Draw of MARVEL Comic Artwork In Aid Of African Famine Victims

We sometimes forget how lucky we really are. Most of us have never known the true horrors of real hunger. We are all likely to survive the worst natural disaster to date that the planet has ever seen. There are those, however, who won't.

The famine in Ethiopia continues to take lives, despite all the excellent charity work and the millions of pounds already donated to that starving part of the world. The appalling death toll would have been even higher without that aid, yet the terrifying truth is that it will go higher if we don't continue to help...

The next possible harvest in that drought-stricken land will not be until December - and that's if the rains do not fail again. Yet there lies a dreadful irony, for should the rains fall, they could damage what food stocks there are, and hinder the movement of vital relief supplies. The end of the drought, should it come, will not end the suffering...

That's why, six months after the *Band Aid* Live Aid concert was equally as important. And it's why Marvel and Save the Children Fund are asking for your help again - now. Help us to help...

In our efforts to help the starving of Ethiopia, we're holding a Marvel Artwork Draw with original comic art generously donated by many Marvel freelancers as prizes. And for the overall draw winner, there's a sensational top prize...

Back in May, the mighty *X-MEN* creators, Chris Claremont and John Romita Jr. appeared on TV-AM. John, and X-MEN inker Dan Green, produced a fabulous *X-MEN* picture, featuring TV-AM presenters Henry Kelly and Anne Diamond. This unique colour painting, signed by the *X-MEN* creators, and now framed, will be the first prize in the draw.

Second prize will be John Romita Jr.'s pencils for this illustration, again now framed, and signed by its creator. Other prizes include Alan Davis' artwork from the cover of *CAPTAIN BRITAIN* Number 1, the Dave Gibbons/John Higgins cover artwork to the recent *DOCTOR WHO* Summer Special, some *DOCTOR WHO* story pages from John Rickard, and the artwork from a giant John Stokes *TRANSFORMERS* poster.

Plus, there are many more prizes of artwork, posters and signed comics too numerous to mention. Enter NOW, and you could snap up some superb Marvel Art helping us to help.

Come on - help us to help! Taking part is easy and it's not expensive. Your money will go to people in desperate need, and



There is hope - the suffering can be stopped. Australian nurse Judith Dunbar describes the first 150 children admitted to SCF's new centre at Bulbul: "They were in a terrible state, lethargic, not interested in food, crying a lot, covered with scabies and lice and really skinny, really in a mess. Three weeks later, it was a different place. The kids had started to play, chasing each other around the shelters, washing every day, and enjoying their food. They started to laugh and follow me around. It was very rewarding."

You might be surprised to learn that this is *Save The Children* Fund's 65th year of operation. The plight of the starving in Ethiopia has meant that it has probably been their most active, too. And, although much needed charity work has been carried out by the SCF in many parts of the world, including Britain, it is the famine areas of Africa which will be receiving every single penny raised from this prize draw.

How will the money be spent? Well, setting up feeding centres and keeping them going is a major operation. Water and shelter, as well as food, are all vital if a centre is to save lives. Most of the money raised will be spent providing these items. But, frequently, children on arrival at the SCF centres need medical care too, as the undernourished are much more likely to catch and succumb to disease. Thus, for all this life-saving work to continue, regular deliveries of food and supplies are essential - a major problem in Ethiopia, with its poorly developed road system - so some money will go to providing trucks and spare parts.

Marvel UK is not a large company. Our readership is not enormous, but we are hoping that on this occasion, it will be generous. What money we manage to raise together is going to be very, very important. There are thousands, maybe millions of lives still at stake. Every single penny is going to count. Please, help us to help...



You can enter as many times as you like - just photo-copy this section, or check out other Marvel UK titles featuring this page - but each draw ticket you send us must have an accompanying 50p donation cheque or postal order. All proceeds from this draw will go to the famine sufferers of Ethiopia.

The draw for the prizes will be held on 7th December at the Central Hall, Westminster Comic Mart. In the interests of fairness, no entrant may win more than one prize. The names of all prize winners will appear in every Marvel publication. On behalf of the winners in Africa - the people who will stay alive because of your donations - we say... AGZAIR YISTE-LIGNE... THANK YOU.

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you could win one of many totally unique Marvel prizes. All you have to do is complete this draw ticket, cut it out and send it to us, together with a donation cheque/postal order* for 50p made out to: **MARVEL/SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND FOR ETHIOPIA.**

Our address is: **MARVEL/SCF, 23 Redan Place, Bayswater, London W2 4SA.**

*Please do not send cash. If you'd like to make a cash donation, send it directly to *Save The Children* Fund, at Mary Datchelor House, Grove Lane, Camberwell, London SE5 8RD.



A man, yet an avenging shadow, he scoured the underworld of 1930's New York. Then an encounter with a terrifying, deathless evil left him forever changed. Immortal, both more than a man yet less than human, he haunts those alleyways still – and still the forces of evil quail to the name of . . .

Night RAVEN

MIDSUMMER MADNESS

by Jamie Delano Illustrations by Ivan Allen episode 3

From the back of a white car – parked on the edge of the dock, in the shadow of a black freighter called *The Starry Eye* – Yi Yang watched the filthy harbour water slop and churn in the slowly

widening chasm between the ship's rusty flank and the dock-wall.

She touched a button and the black glass of the window slid smoothly up, shutting out the sharp smell of ozone and oil. As if this were a pre-arranged signal, the driver started the whispering engine and let

the car roll steadily down the dock towards the gate. The tall, latticed-steel frames of a rank of cranes sloped arms in a silent, giant guard of honour as they passed.

Somewhere, deep inside the cold, pale nest of her body, a small egg of satisfaction was forming. The city had



expelled Night Raven and delivered him to her hands. He danced to her tune again. When, by an accident of coincidence, his haphazard world had come crashing down around him, she had been there. When there had been nowhere for him to run, she had opened up an avenue of escape. Now he lay, crated in the black belly of the *Starry Eye* — his mind lost in the blacker belly of unconsciousness, like a dormant seedling waiting for new earth to call it back to life.

Yi Yang would provide that new earth — in Mexico. She would provide the fugitive's dream, a new life in a new place. A fresh start, free from pursuit. In return, the wild child would be hers once more. She would re-tie the strings. He would not run free again.

At first his world was just an eternity of rotation. He lay on his back staring upwards at the varnished, wooden blades of the fan as they swung endlessly around the grime-encrusted metal boss. Red and green light coloured the landscape of the ceiling in alternating angular splashes.

Numbers came back to him first. He began to count the rotations of the fan. Each circle could have been a lifetime, each splash of red or green the birth or dying of a universe. He counted them carefully, there was nothing else to do. At around four thousand rotations he became aware of his breathing — a slow, dry, circular movement that echoed his counting. White light replaced the black — a callous deluge of memory forced its rough fingers into the recesses of his mind. The name exploded from him as he came bolt upright in the bed, nausea twisting him as the light stabbed his eyes.

"Yiii Yanggg!"

A cold sweat dried on Night Raven's forehead as the blinding light faded like the cries of seagulls on the wind. Yi Yang had been the last thing before the emptiness. Yi Yang in the wind, looking down at him from the stack of garbage as her twin boys had hurtled down to plant their darts in him.

Night Raven glared about him, sweeping the room with his unblinking eyes — suddenly afraid that she might be watching. Reassured that he was alone, he allowed himself time to take note of his surroundings.

He was in a room. A hotel room, he deduced from its anonymous furnishings. But where? How?





He had been running – a fugitive from the law, alone, hounded and harried through the streets of New York. He had been wounded and weak – a sinner dragging his retribution behind him. Yi Yang must have brought him here. But where was this place? How long had it been?

He checked his wounds, realising fully for the first time as he did so that he was naked in the large, clean bed. The wounds were completely healed. That meant at least a week.

A week of oblivion – his first period of total unconsciousness in nearly thirty years. His mind was clearer than he could remember it. He felt almost rested. As always though, the various rough-healed mutilations of his immortal body appalled and revolted him. He wrapped the white linen of the sheet around him, covering the corrupt and ugly flesh, and swung his legs over the side of the bed. The ceramic tiles of the floor were cool to the bare soles of his feet.

Savouring the sensation, he straightened his stiff limbs and shuffled, like a shambling Roman emperor, towards the window of the room. Daylight – sliced by the *louvre*s – striped him. Gingerly, as if opening the door of a furnace, he worked the latch. It was several minutes before his eyes could cope with the intensity of the light.

The window was three stories up in a white stucco wall – overlooking an alley in which a red dog was snuffling at a stack of cardboard boxes. The wall was studded with windows the same as his. The view to his left was largely obscured by the twisted red and green tubes of a neon sign which hung on the corner of the building. He spelled out the convoluted lettering. *Hotel Mexicali*.

A sudden rattle of kitchen noise and a laughing voice calling out in unintelligible Spanish alerted him to the sense of hearing. He heard the heavy, tidal growl of traffic in surrounding streets – punctuated by arpeggios of horns. More foreign shouts bantered to his ears. The steady fan on the ceiling had a regular, piping squeak. As he stood battle to understand, an unseen fly droned past him. Instinctively his hand flicked, like a blunt lizard tongue, and the fly was silent.

Mexico. Somehow he was in Mexico.

Night Raven dampened the confusion which boiled within him by searching the room. He began with the rickety wardrobe. In it there were clothes – good clothes. A white cotton

suit and a shirt. Ties – black and white. Tan shoes and a Panama hat with a felt band. They looked as if they would fit him perfectly.

Next to the wardrobe there was a door of dark wood. Night Raven eased it open. Inside a huge, enamel bath gleamed palely in the dim light. On a shelf above it were a collection of cut-glass cosmetic bottles and old-fashioned cut-throat razor. Deliberately avoiding catching sight of himself in the oval, wooden-framed mirror, Night Raven crossed to the bath and turned one of the big brass taps. Harsh metallic knockings and belchings preceded the water but, eventually, a torrent pounded out onto the old enamel. A startled spider scabbled frantically at the impossibly steep slopes. Night Raven ignored it. He was lost in the memory of another time – transported fifty years back to his prime. Comforted by the chuckle of the water he moved back into the main room to continue his search.

The drawers of the dresser contained the most fascinating discoveries – he emptied them and laid out the contents on the bed.

His revolver was there – black on the white sheet of the bed, heavy with menace. A handful of bullets clustered round it, like sucking pigs at a sow. His two long-bladed knives flanked it, watched by a pair of dark glasses. There was a money-clip, in which he counted 10,000 pesos in bills of varying denominations. He did not know what a peso would buy – but 10,000 of them sounded like a fortune.

Excitement grew in him – the running tap was forgotten and the spider died unnoticed – as he read and re-read the instructions on the boxes and spray cans before him. It was theatrical make up, of the most modern and effective sorts. Here was everything that he needed to re-create his face – to become human again. His clumsy hands trembled as he fumbled with a can of liquid latex. Gently, lovingly, he squeezed the button and, with a soft hiss, the gouged and furrowed hide of his forearm became smooth new skin. He reached out and picked up something dark and limp and furry, like a dead rat. It was a wig. Ridiculously self-conscious, he planted it on to his head and patted it into place.

Could he...? Would he dare...? After all these years of being the creature of the shadows – the misshapen monster that covered its face from the scorn of humanity – could he go out into the light of day and move

amongst men once more?

For over an hour, Night Raven lay immersed in the deep, hot, fragrant water – letting the grime of years soften and dissolve – feeling sensation soaking through scarred leather skin, relaxing taut, clenched muscles. Eventually he dried himself, then doused his ravaged torso in rivers of eau de cologne and dusted his tingling skin with blizzards of talcum powder.

Since he had taken Yi Yang's poison of immortality, little hair had grown on Night Raven's face or head. For the sake of completeness though, he took the cut-throat razor and shaved the sparse stubble as close as the ridged and pitted skin would allow. Shaving was a ritual which he had forgotten – he grew absorbed in it, re-familiarising himself with the blasted terrain of his features. This was the canvas on which he would perform his creation. Finally he was ready to begin. On the dresser he laid out all of the pots, tubes and vials. Then the tweezers, the gums and resins, the little bits of incidental hair. Then, covering each lidless eye in turn with tape, he sprayed the latex, flooding the scoured topography of his face with smooth numbness until he had no more feature than a balloon.

Face after face he built for himself while the squeaking fan ticked away the seconds of the night. As each was completed he would consider it quizzically. Some were old – some young. Some were sinister – some stupid. Each he tore off in frustration – none was his own. Soon after dawn he used the last of the latex. This would have to be the one. He let his mind fill the face – pinching here, thickening there – putting in muscles – lining it – colouring it. This one was better. It was a strong face – the face he could have worn at fifty. Night Raven was proud of it. He gummed down the thick black line of an eyebrow and lifted the wig into place. He inclined the new head slightly and spoke.

"Hello." His voice was still the same – hoarse and abrasive – and the mouth moved stiffly, but the effect was startlingly real.

As he stepped from the rattling cage of the ancient elevator – his shoes clicking on the black and white mosaic tiles of the hotel lobby floor – Night Raven knew what it was to feel



like a million dollars. He adjusted the dark glasses, settled the Panama low on his head and, with a flick of the Malacca cane which he had found at the back of the wardrobe, moved out into the bright world to subject himself to the acid test of scrutiny.

The report of his leather soles on the tiled floor sounded like gunshots but the desk-clerk barely glanced up as he passed by. Obviously this was a discreet hotel.

"Buenos Dias, Senor. Welcome to Mexico City."

Night Raven grunted in reply and, with head down, took his face outside to mingle it with the 13,000,000 others which inhabited the second largest city in the world.

The street was a remnant of the old colonial city. Dressed as he was, surrounded by the faded splendour of the architecture, Night Raven felt at ease. It was as if — along with the accumulated filth — decades of wasted existence had been washed from him by the bath. He saw a vine of tiny, delicate red flowers trailing from a pot on a verandah. He heard a woman laugh, warm and rich, in an upstairs room. For a moment his heart quickened with hope. Then the oppression of the miles of sweltering buildings — the stench of sweating humanity, stewed in a soup of polluted air — broke over him like a wave. He stepped from the small street into a hurtling river of screaming, blaring traffic and shouting, jostling people. He looked back once as the throng caught him up and saw, in faded, peeling paint, the street name, high on the corner building ... Calle dos Noches ... The street of Night ... Then he was adrift in the sea of life.

A kiosk caught his eye. Casually, he sauntered to it and, not trusting himself to speak, pointed to a brightly coloured picture of an ice-cream. His hand shook as he handed over the smallest of his bills. The vendor tutted, and counted out pocketfuls of change. Night Raven smiled stiffly — strawberries danced on his tongue. Then, careful not to drip ice-cream on his suit, he began his slow climb through the suburbs of the city.

After a while, with the ice-cream finished and feeling flushed by his success with commerce, Night Raven waved down a passing taxi with a flicker of his cane. In his white suit he was a beacon — the driver swung over to the kerb with a squeal of brakes.

"Ah, Americano. Si? I say where you wanna go, Joe?"

Caught off guard, Night Raven could only point in the direction he

had been walking.

"Okay, Joe, you the boss," said the driver, reaching out and setting the metre whirling.

Night Raven was thankful that the driver made no further attempts at conversation as he stared out of the window at the seemingly endless urban landscapes of Mexico City. He was like one in a dream — dazzled by the spectrum of life which surrounded him. The daylight gave every detail an intensity which had been absent in shadowy, night-time New York. The contrasts were sharper. He watched as people in expensive cars moved between modern buildings, whilst the same eye saw people with no shoes moving amongst the cars, begging. They passed grim factories — hissing in the bleary sun. They curved down leafy avenues, past walled mansions with moist gardens where Dobermans padded like black spirits amongst the green.

Gradually though, as the taxi climbed further out of the heart of the city and the sun sloped slowly towards evening, the paved roads began to give way to rutted tracks. The large, stockaded houses and leafy avenues were left behind, to be replaced by crowded huddles of roughly built shacks. As far as his eye could see, cement blocks and corrugated iron formed a warren of homes — strewn in congested piles, like a child's discarded building bricks. A million dark doorways seemed to gape towards the road like hungry mouths.

The weight of this poverty, drawn to the magnet of the city, was claustrophobic. Night Raven felt the miles of despairing lives which surrounded him, pressing down from the misty slopes of the mountain, crushing each other against the city's bright column of civilisation as, like a besieging army of patient accusation, they inched towards the glittering promise of survival. The oppression squeezed Night Raven. The latex face was hot, choking. His breath came in short sharp gasps, like the strokes of a wood-saw. The increasingly nervous taxi-driver — glad of the excuse to stop — pulled up and twisted round in his seat.

"You okay, Joe?" he enquired. "Is the thin air. No good." With graphic expression, the man pantomimed death by suffocation.

"Why you wanna come here, Joe ... ? Is Barrio ... Shanty Town ... Only for Indios."

He wound down his window swiftly and spat his disdain into the mud.

"Les' go back to the city. You don' look so good."

The driver, keen now to unload his fare and be paid, bounced the car down the rough road at a careless pace. Night Raven was only partly aware of the monologue of broken English which now accompanied their reckless passage. The elation which had filled him earlier had boiled away. The shanty town had filled him with a dark foreboding. Its hope and hopelessness overwhelmed him like a thunder-cloud. Idly, he pulled elastic strings of latex from the back of his hands.

The taxi-driver's monologue was nearing its climax when it happened.

"They should smash it with tractors ... the army should come with dynamite ... KAE OOM!" He demonstrated the effect of the explosion with an excited flap of his hands. Unfortunately, the driver's imaginary levelling of the Barrio coincided with a smaller — though more concrete — crater in the surface of the road. The car tripped and span. A group of children who had been trudging through the half-light beside the ditch, dropped the heavy sacks which weighed them down and leapt clear of the careering car. All except one.

Helplessly, Night Raven watched as the front, near-side fender bore down on one small, ragged boy. The inevitability was unbearable — it seemed to happen so slowly. With an almost inaudible folding of metal, the boy was tossed as if by the horns of a bull. The small body flailed upwards through a flurry of small plastic bags which flew from his burst sack and, in a second, crashed into the muddy ditch. The car came to rest with its horn jammed on. The driver beat at the steering wheel repeatedly, curses flowing from him in a steady, bitter stream.

Numbly, Night Raven watched as, with eerie suddenness, people began to appear from the maze of the darkening Barrio. He watched as two men lifted the limp body from the ditch and, crossing themselves, laid it out on the rough ground. More people appeared and stood, staring accusingly at the vehicle. Their eyes seemed to burn into him. No-one cried, no-one ranted, they just stared. Abruptly, the horn was silent. The driver jumped from the car and ran, shouting and waving his arms angrily, but then quietened in the face of the passive hostility which met him. Nervously, he backed towards the car again, bent to the window and whispered to Night Raven.

"I think we should give them money, Senor. ... Or maybe they will

kill us . . . Crazy Indios."

With his lungs clawing for breath and a strange, high singing in his ears, Night Raven left the car and crossed to where the body lay. Except for the distant barking of a dog, there was no sound. He took the money-clip from his pocket and held it out over the body of the child. Strings of latex trailed from his hand which seemed to writhe beneath the peeling skin. No-one reached for the money. No-one even blinked. He let the wad of notes fall, feeling their eyes sucking at him as he turned and hurried for the waiting car. Somewhere amongst them a voice breathed "El Diablio". He imagined the hands fluttering in protective genuflection. They knew him.

The drive back to the city centre was silent. The taxi-driver left Night Raven near to the hotel. He did not ask for payment. It was with a grim smile under the clammy latex face that Night Raven realised that he now knew what 10,000 pesos would buy. A child's life and a strawberry ice-cream. As his tan shoes clacked over the mosaic floor of the lobby, Night Raven dug his fingers cruelly into the plastic falseness of his face and tore it from him - feeling the air bathe the mutilated reality beneath. Like an insect, he shook the dead cast away - dropping it into the well of the elevator shaft - a gruesome trophy for the janitor to find.

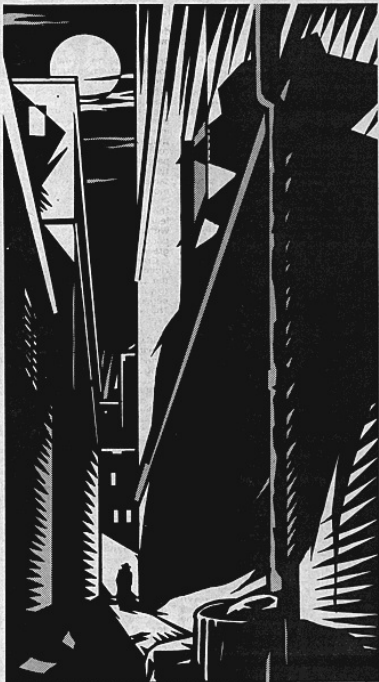
He was sickened to his soul. How could he have believed in this futile rebirth? He was Night Raven - his humanity was lost forever.

In the dark, early hours of the morning, a pale grey shadow slithered, unobserved, down the back wall of the Hotel Mexicali. At the narrow entrance to the Calle dos Noches, the shadow paused briefly and became a man.

Heavy gloved hands turned up the collar of a filthy, torn trenchcoat. Clumsy fingers tugged the brim of an incongruously new Panama hat lower over a face that seemed to gleam like cold bone. Then the shadows fluttered briefly and the figure was gone - swallowed by the welcoming darkness.

Night-time in the city . . .

The End



Re: Incident at HAMLEYS TOYS,
Regent Street.



We had received earlier reports of children in Halloween costumes in the area...



...and some of them were in the shop, playing.



The Cherubim

At this point, we were still unaware of the extent of the disturbance.



NEITHER DID HE! BUT, INSTEAD OF JUST CREATING AN IMAGE HE'S MAKING THE BIG PEOPLE'S NIGHTMARE REALLY HAPPEN!

QUILL!

COME ON - I'M SAVING YOU!



play PART 2 grounds AND PARASITES!

SCRIPT / PENCILS INKS LETTERS EDITOR
MIKE COLLINS MARK FARMER STARKINGS IAN RIMMER



Wainwright, Boyle and myself went further into the shop where we found that the security staff had fled but the trouble-makers remained.





It was then that the boy in the Fright-mask got violent.



P.C. Wainwright received multiple cuts to his left arm, though I cannot recall seeing a knife.

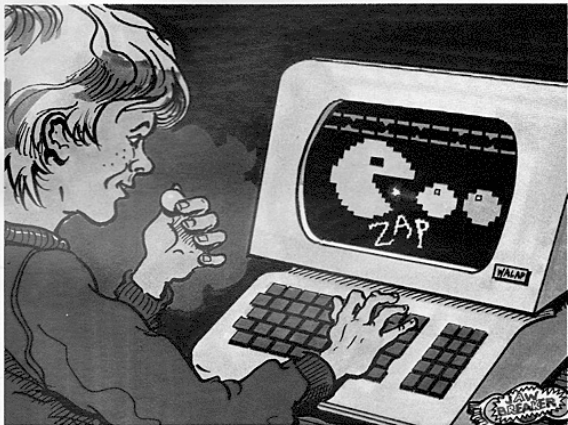




None of the officers present were injured except PC Wainwright. However, damage was extensive and the children escaped. It is my belief that this incident may be linked to the "Parasites" juvenile gang, presently under investigation.



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